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I Wanted to Sleep Like a Baby

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I wanted to sleep like a baby

Eva-Maria Sher

I was in a bike race.

I wore cleats and was
pedaling hard;

I was winning...

Hundreds of fellow racers
pressed down on me.

I became afraid and
dropped my bike...

My mother always said
*When you hear St. Paul's
six o'clock bells, come on
home, it'll be getting
dark...*

But I was walking in some
strange village. Lights were
coming on in the cottages.
My cleats made a lonely sound
on the cobblestones...

Neighbors were saying
good night across fences
and from front doors. I wanted
to sit with them at their
kitchen table...

I wanted to inhale the
fragrance of their soup
their evening bread—
the sound of their
laughter...

I wanted to open the door
to one of their bedrooms and crawl
under a down comforter—

I wanted to sleep
like a baby...

I wanted that murmur
of voices across the hall
wanted the strip of light
through the half-closed door—
wanted to...

Get up in the morning
and ask for the way home.